



Peacock

(*Pavo cristatus*)

Peafowl are described in superlatives; the most elegant, the most colorful, they are both of these. The male blue peacock is a bright, glossy blue from his head to his chest. From beak tip to tail, a mature blue peacock may reach 7 1/4 feet, and may have a wingspan of 42 inches. Peahens have a more subtle tan to brown coloration.

Habitat & Diet

Peafowl ran wild in the jungle of southeast Asia long before the advent of man. Their diet consists of anything they can swallow: lizards, snakes, insects, leaves, berries, and seeds. Leopards and tigers are their only predators. In the wild, peafowl live in small groups in hilly forest areas, roosting in trees at night.

Fascinating Facts



The Indian or Blue Peacock exhibits a marked sexual dimorphism. The male peafowl is more striking, with metallic tinted feathers covering much of his body. A pronounced train of over 200 "eyed" feathers extend over his tail, which he spreads into a fan during courtship to attract the hen. The train often provides a defense mechanism as well, inexperienced predators will grab the releasable tail instead of their body. One thing not often stressed about peafowl is their utility, they eat tons of bugs and keep snakes away. In Asia, they are used for alarms by the villages to warn of any prowling tigers.

Status

There are more peafowl in the US than in India where it is the national bird. The export of peacock train feathers from India is now illegal. These ornamental birds are sacred in many locations in their native range. They nest and walk freely through local villages.



Length: 7 1/2 ft
2/3's tail
Weight: 5-10 lbs
Habitat: Grasslands, light woods that border jungles.
Range: India & Sri Lanka
Life Expectancy: Over 20 years
Female: Peahen
Male: Peacock



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